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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NDJAMENA 001178

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/C, LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA
WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [KDEM](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: CHAD OPPOSITION SEEKS INTERVENTION IN WAKE OF
FIGHTING

REF: NDJAMENA 1166

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Classified By: POL John O'Leary. Reason 1.5 (d)

11. (C) Summary. In the wake of reported heavy fighting in eastern Chad, opposition leaders called on the Ambassador to urge the international community to impose a cease-fire and force President Deby to hold a national dialogue which included the rebel factions. The Ambassador assured them of U.S. support for meaningful dialogue and for electoral reform, but noted that neither we nor the international community can force Deby into talks he does not want to have.
End summary.

12. (U) The umbrella opposition group Coordination of Political Parties for Defense of the Constitution (CPDC) called Tuesday morning (9/26) and requested an urgent meeting with the Ambassador. Four opposition leaders attended: Salibou Garba, Ibeni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, Lol Mahamat Choua, and Abdelkader Walad Kamouge.

13. (C) The CPDC leaders told the Ambassador that the security situation was "grave" in Chad. According to them, President Deby had incurred a major defeat in the East, and there were many dead and wounded. The national army is suffering from desertions and low morale. The rebel groups are only waiting for the roads to dry as the rainy season ends before driving on the eastern provincial capital of Abeche. The CPDC leaders asserted that the Chadian people are aware of Deby's reverses and that they, too, want a dialogue to peacefully end the eastern conflict. Nonetheless, Deby is refusing to recognize that Chad is on the verge of civil war.

14. (C) The opposition leaders declared that French support for Deby could not resolve the underlying issues that divide Chadians, which they see as Deby's refusal to permit participative and transparent government. French policy, they claim, is based on a personal relationship with Deby, preventing the French from comprehending the extent of the current security crisis.

15. (C) The CPDC insisted that only an all-inclusive national dialogue can save Chad from chaos. Dialogue must include the rebel factions, even if Deby is opposed to their participation. While not in contact with the rebels, the opposition leaders asserted, they believed that the rebel factions were also open to dialogue. The CPDC urged the international community to impose a cease-fire in the East and force Deby to participate in meaningful dialogue under the aegis of an imposed third-party facilitator.

¶6. (C) The Ambassador assured the CPDC leadership that we are following the situation in the East closely. He noted that Deby had faced and defeated previous rebellions and that the Chadian president apparently did not share their conviction that he had suffered a major defeat. Moreover, the rebels want Deby out; but Deby doesn't want to go. In any case, Deby does not accept counsel from the international community and is not prepared for a meaningful dialogue. Consequently, we are not in a position to impose solutions on Chad.

¶7. (C) The Ambassador reminded the CPDC leaders that we have pushed hard for electoral reform and transparent government, most recently during Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Yamamoto's call on Prime Minister Pascal Yoadimnadj. We proposed to assist the reform process, in conjunction with our international partners, in anticipation of the legislative elections in 2007.

¶8. (U) The leaders responded that the Prime Minister had no power and was incapable of imposing reform. They continued to assert that free and fair elections could only flow from an all-inclusive, substantive, national dialogue. They were skeptical that meaningful elections could ever occur under President Deby.

¶9. (U) The Ambassador stressed to the CPDC leaders that we share their desire for true national dialogue and would continue to follow the events in the East closely. We would continue to consult with our international partners; but we do not have a magic wand with which to heal Chad's many wounds.

¶10. (C) Comment. The meeting took place in the context of reports from the East that after enduring heavy casualties the national army, under President Deby's direct command,

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had failed to dislodge rebels from their positions along the Sudan border, in the area of Hadjer Marfaine. The essence of these reports is beginning to seep into the public domain where they could shake the people's confidence in President Deby's ability to prevail. End comment.

¶11. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
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